

STORY **GINA MAKKAR** | PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**



# FROM DATED TO SOPHISTICATED

A Thornhill home gets a modern makeover.

SOMETIMES, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SPACE, it's about what you do with it. When homeowner Tammy Meinstein and her family first moved into their home, it worked for them, but 10 years later, it was beginning to age. "We did actually look into moving, but we realized we couldn't get what we wanted if we moved." In love with the home, street, and backyard oasis, they decided to explore a renovation, and called in **Karen Birer** and **Amy Sheridan** of **Casa Perfecta** to help achieve a more modern vision. The home's original

layout featured smaller, compartmentalized rooms reflective of older spaces. "I wanted the home to be open and modern, but it was still very important for people to be able to put their feet up," says Tammy. "I still wanted a homey feel, and not feel it was a museum. I'd seen many homes they'd done, and I just knew that their eye was exactly what I wanted." Half-walls, columns and bulkheads closed in the original space, making the house feel smaller. "There was a wall down the centre and it really cut the home in half," says Karen. "That was one of the biggest

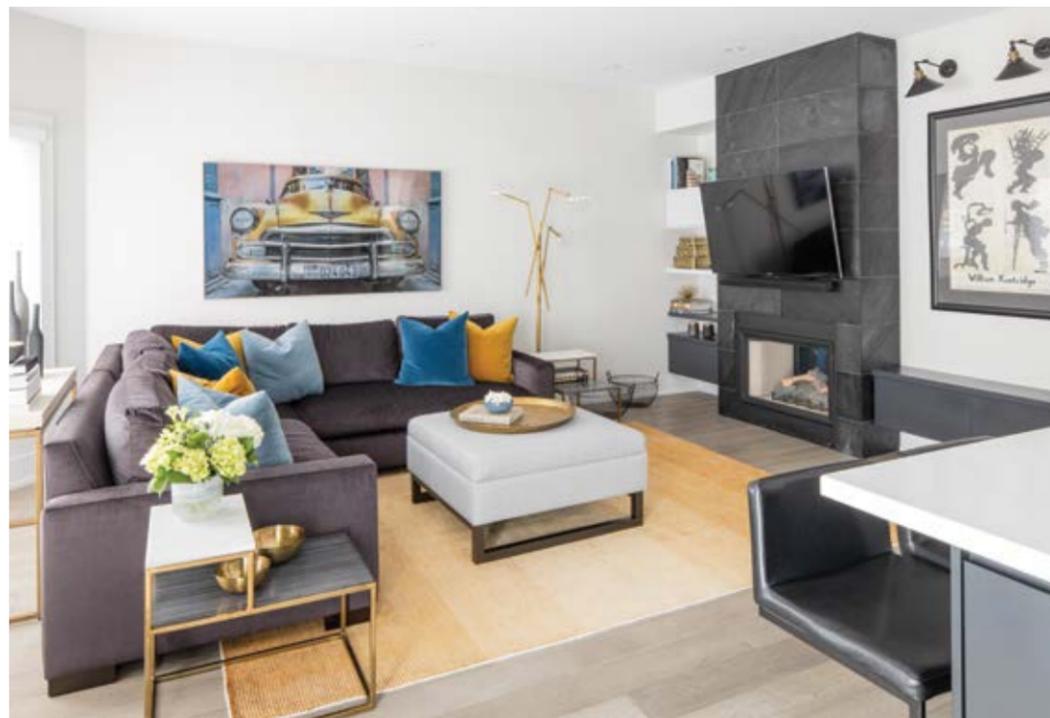
concerns. As you walked in, you basically walked into a post, so that was one of the criteria, to get rid of that and open it up." As part of the budget, the team prepared to install steel support beams when they removed the walls, but in a stroke of luck, the demo uncovered no troublesome posts. Standing in the front doorway, the main floor is now bright and airy, one area connecting seamlessly to the next. A small wall between the dining room and the hallway remains, but helps to delineate each of the spaces. *Continued on page 58*



**ABOVE:** The removal of walls resulted in unobstructed sightlines and a contemporary new look. **TOP RIGHT:** An island with stools is a more relaxed option for dining. **RIGHT:** The dining room flows into the adjacent kitchen. Unique storage and a bar complete the open space.



The colours in the artwork were used as the foundation for the palette in the family room.



area with chairs and a coffee table from **Elte Market** and utilized the space by the window to create a window seat. “Since this space was done, the client will often call me and say ‘I’m sitting on my favourite chair.’ She’ll have a drink, she’ll have a coffee, so it’s a great use of space. It worked out very well.”

The dining room incorporates a built-in sideboard that spans the length of the room, complete with a bar area and storage. A table from Restoration Hardware ties into the neutral elements throughout. Chairs from **Union Lighting and Furnishings** were reupholstered with custom fabric, and a pendant light from **Elte** completes the space.

In the new custom kitchen, Karen and Amy chose to close off two small windows to create a more functional space. “Sometimes,

taking something away is a good thing,” says Karen. Sleek white cabinetry is adorned with hardware from **Berenson Inc.** A dark island is topped with Caesarstone in Pure White. Barstools sourced by Casa Perfecta provide seating.

The team breathed new life into the family room with a punch of colour. “We went to the gallery with them, and the client fell in love with a piece, and it became the inspiration for everything,” says Karen. They pulled colours from the art found at **PI Fine Art**. Vivid yellow and blue pillows from Elte Market and a yellow rug from **CB2** complement the plush grey sectional sourced by Casa Perfecta. The fireplace was refreshed with new surround from **Stone Tile**, custom built-ins and sconces from **Universal Lamp**.

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To the right, the staircase was a key element of the renovation. “We designed and custom built it, and it was a very important feature,” says Karen. It’s a showstopper, with soft grey treads and rectangular wrought iron balusters to create architectural interest.

With the hallway closet removed, the adjoining laundry room was extended by two feet to create a built-in mudroom, and a sliding barn door was added. “I insisted on having a barn door somewhere and they incorporated it in a way I absolutely love,” says Tammy.

With the walls open, the entry flowed to the dining room and the kitchen beyond, but an awkward area at the front of the home remained. “It was a weird area in the middle of nothing. Do you create a larger dining room?” says Karen. Instead, they opted for a cosy sitting



**TOP LEFT:** Clean lines and subtle hints of gold create a seamless transition from one room to the next. **LEFT:** The custom staircase is a showstopper at the front of the home. **ABOVE:** The black and white powder room was kept simple and serene.

feature



As for the rest of the home, Karen says the neutral canvas allows the homeowners to inject whatever they wish easily. “Other than the soft touches of gold coming through, we kept it very neutral.”

The upper level master en suite and the main floor powder room also received an update with fixtures from **Roman Bath Centre** and in the powder room, a fun but functional floor tile from **SS Tile & Stone**.

Throughout the renovation, Tammy let the team run with their vision. “I gave them carte blanche on the design,” she says. “I’m not a designer, I can’t visualize things. I didn’t have a lot of input because we were thrilled with what they presented.”

She adds that in working with Karen and Amy, she’d recommend them to anybody. “Karen’s homes all have a different feel to a standard renovated house. It’s her eye, and she and Amy, they complement each other. They know how to take the heart of what they are doing and incorporate that into the whole feel.”

The result is an open space that flows naturally, a space that’s connected, a space that brims with modern love. **OH**



**TOP LEFT:** A freestanding tub helps maximize the space in the en suite. **TOP RIGHT:** A window seat makes use of a nook by the front door. **RIGHT:** Dark cabinetry and white counters create crisp contrast in this bathroom.



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